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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

HOMEMAKER'S CHAT — Monday, April 15, 1940.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "THOROUGH CLEANING." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Publication available, Farmers' Bulletin 1834-F, House Cleaning Management and Methods.

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Every homemaker has a standard of cleanliness for her home. She may not be conscious of her standard, but if it is high she feels uncomfortable when her house is disordered or dirty. Many factors may make it difficult to keep a home up to the homemaker's standard. For example, meal preparation, laundry work, caring for children or working at personal or professional interests outside the home. Lack of help and interest from other members of the family. Outside dirt carried into the house by persons or blowing.

The Bureau of Home Economics believes that a definite, but flexible, plan for cleaning, with attention to effective methods and equipment, will go a long way toward making cleaning easier.

And so the Bureau suggests careful planning for daily, weekly, and monthly cleaning; planning for certain semi-annual check-ups, and a few annual jobs. The old-fashioned house-cleaning spring and fall that turned the house and the family topsy-turvy is outmoded. Now frequent light cleaning is the idea. It's the most economical use of the homemaker's time, energy, cleaning supplies, and it's also easiest on household surfaces.

Of course each homemaker's schedule must be adapted to her own household and to the dirt-producing conditions of here locality. If she does all the laundry and cooking, her cleaning schedule must fit in with those daily and weekly jobs. If Monday is wash-day, plan to do only light dusting that day.

Daily cleaning is light- largely a matter of making order and neatness and removing dust. The weekly cleaning will be more thorough. It may be arranged

to take in some of the jobs that come once a month or less often.

Perhaps I'd better explain that point. The bureau says there are two ways you can make semi-annual house-cleaning unnecessary and spread the work throughout the year. The first is: Do certain jobs in several rooms on the same day. And the second is: Clean one room at a time very thoroughly each month.

Now, if you prefer the first way, you might make a list of the kinds of cleaning you could do in all the rooms on the same day. Choose one or more of these clean-up jobs each weekly- or monthly-cleaning day until all are done in all the rooms. You could brush window shades or venetian blinds or wipe blinds throughout. Or brush curtains, walls, and wood trim, or wash these things if necessary. Or wipe all the pictures. Or wipe or wash windows. You could clean all the box springs and mattresses on the same day. Or clean the undersides of all the rugs and the floor beneath them. Another time you might clean closets and drawers. Or polish wood furniture. Or clean upholstered furniture where soiled.

This system works well in homes where outside helpers are hired for some of the heavy work like window cleaning or waxing floors. The same tools and routines are used in several rooms in succession, with little loss of time between rooms.

But if you are one of those housekeepers who enjoy the feeling that a particular room is completely clean from "top to toe",- you'll most likely work with one room at a time. Plan to do one room each month in this way, and also give the basement and storeroom a turn. You'll have one or two months when no special cleaning is done- your vacation, as it were.

Here's the order of work. Start by taking down the curtains and draperies. Brush them if they do not need washing, and lay them in another room. If you can conveniently shift most of the lighter things like chairs, pictures, ornaments and closet contents to a nearby room while you clean you can work faster on the room itself.

Remove window shades and brush them, or brush venetian blinds and wipe. Brush the radiator. If there is a register, lift it out and brush on a newspaper. If necessary, wash it with kerosene, and dry thoroughly with a clean cloth.

Remove the pictures. Brush the walls with a wall brush, beginning at the bottom and working up toward the ceiling, brushing it last. Dust hangs down, and by brushing upward, lifting it, you won't rub in the dust and smear the walls. Brush wood trim as you come to it.

Clean the closet, removing everything. Brush the closet walls and wood trim. Wipe the shelves and floor.

Dust the picture frames and wash the glasses over pictures, also mirrors and windows. Wipe the light bulbs and the enclosing and diffusing bowls with a damp cloth. Brush lampshades.

Before doing the general cleaning of the room some housekeepers remove things from drawers, wipe them out, and then replace everything after turning the paper linings. If the contents of the drawers were not straightened in this way before cleaning, this is part of the general cleaning procedure.

If the furniture is very dusty, use another cloth to polish. Rub waxed furniture unless it is time to give it the yearly coat of wax.

Turn the rug back and wipe under it. Clean the under side of the rugs as well as the upper. You can clean underlays on both sides with a vacuum cleaner if you detach the belt that revolves the brush. A vacuum cleaner brush will tear up the loose fibers of the underlay. After you clean the rug and floors, place the furniture in order and hang the curtains and pictures.

In a bedroom, brush or vacuum the mattress and box springs and make the bed before dusting. If you use a broom instead of a vacuum cleaner or carpet sweeper, dust and polish the furniture last.

And if you would like some further information on cleaning equipment and supplies, and what to do in particular cleaning problems, there's a new Farmer's Bulletin, House Cleaning Management and Methods. Write to the U.S.Department of Agriculture for a copy.

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